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**U.S. NAVY RESPONSES TO INTERNATIONAL
INCIDENTS AND CRISES, 1955 - 1975 (U)
Vol. II - Summaries of Incidents and Responses (U)**

CENTER FOR NAVAL ANALYSES

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⁷Contributors: JIM M. HILL, Judith C. Erdheim

²⁰Volume I is an unclassified volume, pending approval for public release, entitled "Survey of Navy Crisis Operations."

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While this is clearly a British operation, Bendix and Ides list an American response in conjunction with it. Neither provides detailed information. Both indicate that only surface combatant forces were involved.

The best estimate at this point is that one or both units in TF 65.9 (a 2 DD Eastern Mediterranean patrol force) were redeployed in conjunction with the British operation). These were the most logical surface combatants to have been involved.

It is an unusual operation in that neither Bendix nor Ides list any participation by projection forces in the response (neither carriers nor amphibious units). This is quite singular for a response in the Mediterranean.

Panama 3-5/1959

On 25 April a small force consisting of approximately 90 persons landed on Panama's Caribbean coast. It was believed that this force might have been involved in a plot to overthrow the government of Panama. It was also believed to have contacts with Castro's government in Cuba.

In response the U.S. offered the Panamanian government small arms that had been stockpiled in the Canal Zone. Additionally, a surveillance patrol (1 DD) and 1 MSO) was established off Panama's coast to deter additional landings. This force was on station by 30 April. It returned to normal operations on 4 May.

On 1 May the invaders surrendered. Approximately 80 Cubans were in the invasion party.

Bendix provides the best coverage of the operation. No amphibious or carrier forces were involved.

Berlin Crisis 5-9/1959

This was the "Berlin Deadline" Crisis. It followed the 1948 Berlin Blockade Crisis and preceded the 1961 Berlin Aide-Memoire Crisis.

In the autumn of 1958, the Soviets began to express concern regarding the introduction of nuclear armed missiles onto West German territory. In a 10 November speech, Khrushchev denounced the 'remilitarization' of the Federal Republic of Germany. He also stated that it was an appropriate time for the East German regime to begin to handle access to Berlin.

On 27 November Soviet diplomatic notes were sent to the three Western powers in Berlin and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany. They called for negotiations to turn Berlin into a 'free city' and stated that if negotiations did not produce

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an acceptable agreement within a half year, the Soviets would turn control of access to Berlin over to the German Democratic Republic.

Needless to say, these statements raised apprehensions in the West that a possible replay of the 1948 Crisis might be in the making.

In actuality, there was no immediate major crisis. The Soviets soon modified their stance and indicated that it was sufficient that negotiations on the status of Berlin begin within a half year. Eventually even this requirement was dropped and the issue was held in abeyance, pending the Soviet-American summit scheduled for 1960 (which was subsequently cancelled due to the U-2 incident).

However, there was Soviet harassment during this period. From April through September 1959 the Soviets interfered with the transit of supply trains to West Berlin. These actions helped to prompt a U.S. military response.

Bendix, Ides, CVAN-70, and AACU cite a Navy response over the period 5-9/1959. Ides lists only surface combatants in the reaction. All other sources cite attack carrier forces in addition to surface combatants.

While there was a general alert of Navy forces throughout the world, the most immediate response took place in the Mediterranean where elements of the Sixth Fleet were brought to an advanced state of readiness and deployed in an alert posture. Given that the Sixth Fleet CVA force still had a major role in SACEUR's scheduled program, this was an important military-political signal to the Soviet Union, an indicator of U.S. determination.

During May 1959 (the original 'deadline' month) when the response initiated, the Sixth Fleet carrier force consisted of Intrepid and Roosevelt. When the response terminated on 30 September (with the end of Soviet harassment along the access routes to West Berlin) the CVA force was composed of Saratoga and Essex.

George and Smoke provide the best summary of the political events during the crisis (pp: 390-413). Bendix and AACU give the best treatment of the Navy's actions during the response.

PRC-ROC 7/1959

As is the case with three other responses involving the People's Republic of China, it is difficult to obtain information concerning this operation (see the entry for PRC-ROC 7/1957).

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NMCC	National Military Command Center Operational Summary
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